COURSE DESCRIPTION

Completion, individually or in a small group, of a research project under the supervision of a professor. This course allows for the application of already acquired abilities and the acquisition of new knowledge related to carrying out research.

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course allows students to participate in an ongoing research project and, therefore:

1. Enrich the quality of their student experience
2. Increase their autonomy and professional capacity in their area of studies
3. Improve their knowledge of methodologies and the research process
4. Understand the limits of knowledge in research within the social sciences and to become familiar with scientific communication

RESEARCH PROJECT

Students in this Directed Research seminar will join the Community Mobilization in Crisis (CMIC) research team, consisting of faculty and students from the School of Political Studies, the School of International Development and Global Studies, and other uOttawa programs, along with researchers based at the American University of Beirut in Beirut, Lebanon. CMIC’s current research examines community organizing and mobilization in the Middle East, North Africa (MENA), and elsewhere, aiming to bridge paradigms of community development and community organizing developed in North America and propagated by Northern NGOs, donor states, and UN agencies with local and Indigenous models, epistemological and ontological frameworks, and practices. Students will become familiar with the literature on community development and community organizing, will develop their own research questions related to the MENA or other contexts, and will either gather appropriate original data to answer those questions or use case studies or other material being gathered by fellow CMIC research team members. This Directed Research course is ideal for students with an interest in research toward solidarity, decolonising higher education, transnationalism, and transformative or social change. Readings and group meetings will be conducted in English, but knowledge of written or oral Arabic or French will open new opportunities for data collection and analysis.
### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

*(Check those which apply)*

#### 1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

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<td>a</td>
<td>a developed knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances and theoretical approaches in a discipline overall, and/or in a specialized area of a discipline</td>
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<td>b</td>
<td>a developed understanding of many of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how those fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines</td>
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| c | A developed ability to:  

  i) gather, analyze, evaluate, and summarize information | ☒ |
  
  ii) compare the merits of alternate hypotheses or alternative solutions, relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline | ☐ |
| d | a developed, in-depth knowledge of and experience in research in an area of the discipline | ☐ |
| e | developed critical thinking and analytical skills in a major field of discipline and new fields of study | X |
| f | the ability to apply learning from one area of discipline to related fields of study | ☐ |

#### 2. Knowledge of Methodologies

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| a | acquire knowledge of the methodologies in social sciences in order to:  

  i) Evaluate the appropriateness of approaches at a methodological level using well established ideas and techniques | ☐ |
  
  ii) Devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods | ☐ |
  
  iii) Describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship | X |

#### 3. Application of Knowledge

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| a | the ability to review, present and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to:  

  i) develop lines of argument | ☐ |
  
  ii) make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the field of study | X |
  
  iii) apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, within and outside the discipline | ☐ |
  
  iv) where appropriate use this knowledge in a creative and innovative manner | X |
| b | develop the capacity to apply various known methods toward:  

  i) initiating and undertaking a critical evaluation of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and information | ☐ |
  
  ii) Propose solutions | ☐ |
  
  iii) formulating appropriate questions, given the research problems to be addressed | ☐ |
  
  iv) resolve a problem or define the steps to resolve a problem | ☐ |
| c | develop the ability to critically draw upon scientific literature and primary sources | X |

#### 4. Communication skills

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<td>a</td>
<td>Increase the ability to communicate information and arguments, as well as analyze accurately and precisely, orally and in writing, to a range of audiences.</td>
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#### 5. Awareness of the limits of knowledge

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<td>a</td>
<td>Increase the capacity to recognize the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and the skill to evaluate ambiguities and how they might influence results and interpretation of results.</td>
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#### 6. Autonomy and Employability

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| a | Increase the qualities and skills, (those of i, ii, iii) which are transferable to further study, employment, community involvement or other activities  

  i) the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts | X |
  
  ii) the ability to work effectively and efficiently in a team | X |
  
  iii) sound decision-making in complex situations | ☐ |
| b | develop the ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and to select the appropriate and necessary training. | X |
| c | develop behaviours consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility. | X |
Evaluation

A. Mid-term project evaluation [40% of final grade]
Students will a) submit reading notes (minimum 2 paragraphs per reading) for all background reading, and b) submit an analytical review essay of a book or collection of articles related to the focus they want to choose for their final project (minimum 100 pages of reading to be covered in the essay; the essay should be of about 5 pages).

B. Evaluation of final project [60% of final grade]
Students will carry out original research answering a question they develop, using data they collect and/or CMIC’s pool of data. The length and format of the research product may vary depending on students’ interest or skills. Here are some possible examples:

- 3 5-page case studies of different projects along with an opening and closing analysis of central themes;
- a series of edited, transcribed, and subtitled videos based on a single case study along with a series of analytic notes demonstrating what principles or phenomena these examples contest or demonstrate
- a translation of a key text or set of texts (between any two of English, French, Arabic, or another language), along with a reflective essay on the merits and concepts contained in the translated text

The work involved in the final output will be equivalent to a 20-25 page (12 point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, including reference lists) research paper.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Students will meet as a group 4 times before Reading Week – once to discuss the plan for the semester (1 hour), and 3 times to discuss readings (2 hours each). At the fourth session, students will determine their specific topic, and will propose the readings they want to do for their mid-term evaluation. After their mid-term papers are submitted, students will work independently with the professor as needed, and will have 3 group meetings (2 hours each) to discuss their work, get ideas from others, and ensure progress is being made. Students will submit their final projects by the end of the Winter 2018 semester. Students will have the opportunity to present their work at CMIC events over the spring and summer terms, at events held to coincide with our pilot program in Lebanon.

RESOURCES

The Social Sciences Mentoring Centre

The goal of the Social Sciences Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the mentoring centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the Mentoring Centre for very different reasons: talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older student may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills.

The Mentoring Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. Mentors are experienced students, able to answer your questions.
The Academic Writing Help Center
At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer. In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:

- Master the written language of their choice;
- Expand their critical thinking abilities and develop their argumentation skills;
- Understand the requirements of academic writing, as well as methods to AVOID PLAGIARISM.

Career Services
Career Services offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today's world of work.

Counselling and Coaching Service
The Counselling and Coaching Services can assist you thought your academic career.

Access Service
Access Service contributes to the creation of an inclusive environment by developing strategies and implementing measures that aim to reduce the barriers to learning for students who have learning disabilities, health, psychiatric or physical conditions.

Sexual Violence Support and Prevention
The University of Ottawa does not tolerate any form of sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to any act of a sexual nature committed without consent, such as rape, sexual harassment or online harassment. The University, as well as student and employee associations, offers a full range of resources and services allowing members of our community to receive information and confidential assistance and providing for a procedure to report an incident or make a complaint. For more information, visit https://www.uottawa.ca/sexual-violence-support-and-prevention/